

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for considering the present application. In the Final Office Action dated April 19, 2004, claims 1-33 and 37-41 are pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner for reconsideration.

Claim 33 and the intervening claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants have amended claim 33 to refer to all inventors rather than just one inventor. Applicants believe that this rejection has now been overcome.

Claims 12-15 and 20-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated over *Morris* (WO 01/08031). Claim 12 is directed to an invention disclosure system that includes a user computer, a web server having an identification subsystem, and a database coupled to the server. The server provides screens to users so the users provide disclosure information to the server. The server receives disclosure information from said users, stores the information in the database, prompts the users to provide a password associated with the disclosure, and allows access to the disclosure after storing information in the database upon entering the password associated with the user. Applicants respectfully submit that the *Morris* reference does not teach or suggest a password associated with the disclosure. The Examiner points to page 13, lines 1-17, for the proposition of an identification subsystem. The Examiner also points to pages 14 and 22 for this proposition. Page 22 describes that a scientist or engineer logs into the system by entering a user name and password. However, no teaching or suggestion is provided for a password that is associated with the disclosure. The password described in the *Morris* reference is associated with the inventor. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejection of claim 12. Likewise, claims 13, 14 and 15 are dependent upon claim 12 and are believed to be allowable for the same reasons set forth above.

With respect to claim 20, the Examiner points to page 14, lines 1-10, page 11, page 12 *et. seq.*, and page 12 for locking the disclosure. Applicants have reviewed these portions of the *Morris* reference and can find no teaching or suggestion for locking the disclosure. Page 14, lines 1-10, describe a system for signing off "on the application." However, no teaching or suggestion is provided in the passage for locking the disclosure after approval of all the inventors. Page 11, line 12 *et. seq.* describes limiting access to the invention record but does not teach or suggest locking the disclosure to prevent further editing. In fact, the *Morris* reference teaches on page 13, lines 18 through page 14, line 9, that the patent attorney or business manager may use the information to form a patent application. That is, the attorney can edit patent application 66 to add text into the background summary and claims fields. The Examiner also refers the applicants to claims 3 and 4 of the *Morris* reference. These claims merely recite that a person has witnessed the invention disclosure. This does not refer to locking a disclosure. It is common for patent departments to provide spaces on disclosure forms for witnessing the invention. Witnessing the invention is performed by persons other than the inventors. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider claim 20.

Claims 21-26 are also believed to be allowable for the same reasons set forth above with respect to claim 20.

Claims 1-11, 16-22, 27-33, and 37-41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Morris* in view of *Graziano* (5,191,613). Applicants respectfully traverse. Claim 1 recites forming an invention disclosure on-line by entering a plurality of selected information including a first inventor identification information from a user computer, as the plurality of selected information is entered into the computer, storing the selected information in a central storage location, prompting approval of all inventors and after approval of all inventors locking the disclosure to prevent further editing of the disclosure. As mentioned above, applicants have reviewed the *Morris* reference and can find no teaching or suggestion

for locking the disclosure. The Examiner agrees by stating "Morris does not explicitly [state] locking the disclosure after approval to prevent further editing." The *Graziano* reference is cited for locking the disclosure. Applicants were directed to Col. 12, lines 21-28. However, to place that paragraph in context, applicants respectfully request the Examiner to consider lines 8-20 of Col. 12 in conjunction with lines 21-28. These sections refer to editing of a file "contract." The file contract is referred to as the document of interest in Col. 11, line 6. In line 11 of Col. 12. A reference is made to editing capability by way of phone sets and terminals. The parties may agree to store and not authenticate a file. This initiates a locking by file lock software 202 which disconnects the parties from the communications and proceeds to store and lock the file contract in memory. This prevents any user from editing the document alone. When authentication is desired in the next paragraph, one of the parties may elect to authenticate it. When one of the parties elects to authenticate the file, file lock software is used to place the file contract in a read only mode for authentication purposes. The file may then be distributed as described. It appears that the locking is a different type of locking than that set forth in claim 1. As recited in claim 1, "As the plurality of selected information is entered in the computer, storing the selected information in a central location, prompting approval of all inventors, and after approval by all inventors locking the disclosure to prevent further editing of the disclosure. Thus, it is an approval that is prompted that allows the locking of the disclosure. In the case of Col. 12, lines 8-35 of *Graziano* reference, when authentication is not performed, the document is locked. That is, the document may only be edited by all of the inventors. In the present application, although not recited, one user may autonomously amend the disclosure information. It is not until every user is prompted for approval and approves the document that the actual locking takes place. Therefore, the *Graziano* reference actually teaches away from the steps recited in claim 1. Therefore, even a combination of the *Graziano* reference and the *Morris* reference do not provide each of the steps of the present application. No teaching or suggestion is provided for a modification of the references in such a manner. Applicants

therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejection of claim 1 in view of the comments and amendments above.

Claims 2-11 are also believed to be allowable since they are dependent ultimately upon claim 1.

Claim 16 is similar to claim 1 in that the disclosure is locked for further editing after approval by the first inventor and the second inventor. Thus, a positive step of approval must be provided before the disclosure is locked. As mentioned above, this is not taught or suggested in either the *Graziano* or *Morris* references. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejection of claim 16.

Claims 17-19 are also believed to be allowable since they are dependent from claim 16. Claim 20 includes a similar concept for locking the disclosure to create a locked disclosure to prevent further editing of the disclosure when the second inventor approves the disclosure. Of course, the second inventor approves the disclosure after the approval of the first inventor. The *Graziano* reference merely teaches that unless an authentication is performed by one of the parties, the disclosure is locked. Thus, claim 20 illustrates the system may be a sequential-type system. This is not taught or suggested in either the *Graziano* or *Morris* references.

Claims 21-22 are also believed to be allowable for the same reasons set forth above with respect to claim 20.

Claim 27 contains the limitation of "locking the disclosure to create a locked disclosure to prevent editing of the disclosure after each of the one or more inventors approve the disclosure." As mentioned above, this is not taught or suggested in the *Graziano* or the *Morris* references.

Claims 28-32 are also believed to be allowable for the same reasons set forth above.

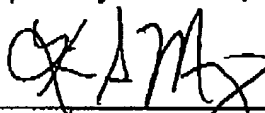
Claim 33 recites "generating an approval log comprising a date of approval by all inventors and associating the approval log with a document." Applicants respectfully submit that no approval log is taught or suggested in either the *Morris* or the *Graziano* references. The Examiner points to Col. 15, lines 14-23, for creating a log for first party comprising date of event and date of verification. This passage, however, refers to outstanding offers and an expiration of offers. No teaching or suggestion is provided for an approval log. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejection of claim 33.

Claims 37-41 are ultimately dependent upon claim 33 and are therefore believed to be allowable for the same reasons set forth above.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all objections and rejections are now overcome. Applicant has added no new material to the application by these amendments. The application is now in condition for allowance and expeditious notice thereof is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments which would place the application in better condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Please charge any fees required in the filing of this amendment to deposit account 06-1510.

Respectfully submitted,



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